

I CLAIM

1. A dispense head comprising a plurality of inlets for connection to separate beverage supply lines, each inlet communicating with a dispense valve opening to a common dispense nozzle.
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2. A dispense head according to claim 1 wherein each inlet opens to an inlet section of the dispense nozzle via a respective dispense valve and the inlet sections merge into a common outlet section.
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3. A dispense head according to claim 2 wherein a lower flow is provided at the start of the dispense and/or at the end of the dispense by opening/closing the dispense valves at different times during the dispense.
- 15 4. A dispense head according to claim 2 wherein the outlet section has a cross-sectional area matching the combined cross-sectional areas of the inlet sections.
5. A dispense head according to claim 2 wherein the inlet sections are
20 inclined relative to the outlet section and converge to merge smoothly into the outlet section avoiding sudden changes in the direction of flow.
6. A dispense head according to claim 2 wherein the dispense valves are on/off solenoid valves.
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7. A dispense head according to claim 2 wherein the dispense valves are operable via a control unit in response to user actuation of a dispense.
- 30 8. A dispense head according to claim 1 wherein means is provided for draining the dispense nozzle downstream of the dispense valve when the dispense valve is closed.

9. A dispense head according to claim 8 wherein the drain means comprises an airway for admitting air to the dispense nozzle at the end of the dispense.

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10. A dispense head according to claim 9 wherein the airway comprises an unrestricted passageway open to atmosphere and air is prevented from being drawn into the nozzle during dispense by a small proportion of the dispensed beverage flowing out through the airway and re-combining with 10 the main beverage stream emerging from the nozzle.

11. A dispense head according to claim 10 wherein, when the dispense valve is closed at the end of the dispense, the flow of the beverage creates a vacuum in the dispense nozzle downstream of the dispense valve that 15 causes air to be drawn into the nozzle through the airway allowing the nozzle to drain fully.

12. A dispense head according to claim 9 wherein the airway comprises a passageway controlled by a drain valve that is closed to prevent air being 20 drawn into the nozzle during beverage dispense.

13. A dispense head according to claim 12 wherein, when the dispense valve is closed at the end of the dispense, the drain valve is opened allowing air to be drawn into the nozzle by the vacuum created by the flow 25 of the beverage and allowing the nozzle to drain fully.

14. A dispense nozzle for dispensing a beverage, the dispense nozzle comprising at least two inlet sections for connection to respective beverage supplies, and an outlet section for dispensing beverage flowing through 30 each inlet section under the control of a dispense valve.

15. A dispense nozzle according to claim 14 wherein the outlet section is sized to match the combined flow through the inlet sections.
16. A dispense head comprising an inlet for connection to a beverage supply line, the inlet communicating with a dispense valve opening to a dispense nozzle, and means for draining the dispense nozzle downstream of the dispense valve when the dispense valve is closed.
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17. A dispense head according to claim 16 wherein the drain means comprises an inlet for admitting air to drain the dispense nozzle on completion of a dispense.
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18. A dispense head according to claim 17 wherein the airway comprises an unrestricted passageway open to atmosphere and air is prevented from being drawn into the nozzle during beverage dispense by a small proportion of the dispensed beverage flowing out through the airway and re-combining with the main beverage stream emerging from the nozzle.
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19. A dispense head according to claim 17 wherein the airway comprises a passageway controlled by a drain valve that is closed to prevent air being drawn into the nozzle during beverage dispense.
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20. A dispense head according to claim 19 wherein a short time delay is provided on completion of a dispense before opening the drain valve.